

Birchanger

July 2010



Magazine

Issue 91

Lamp post knocked over again

Well this time it did not actually hit the deck, but was hit in such a way that it required emergency repairs for which the Parish council will again have to pay.

This time the lamp post was not completely demolished so the cost was less but it still comes down to Birchanger to pick up the final tab. The strange thing is that the last time this happened to the same lamp post when the hedges and verges were being trimmed. Coincidence?

If you did see the incident which occurred in the second week in June, please tell me about it on 812793.



Proposed new access for services?

There are proposals for a new access arrangement for the motorway services, might well adversely affect Birchanger.

A very long time ago when the service area at Junction 8 was first proposed the Parish Council at the time thought that the access should be from the A 120 roundabout. Views may not be quite the same this time around as it will mean that access to and from the lane may become more difficult than it is now. What do you think? Do you want traffic lights at the end of the lane? How do you feel about further development at the roundabout? The possible further urbanisation of the village? Is it a better chance to exit the village at peak times?

Whatever you think your views are important. Please tell me or the District Council about them, as soon as possible.

Speeders Endanger Children on Walson Way

Forest Hall Park is an estate which already has a large number of resident children and they are naturally out and about in this summer weather. The recently opened Walson Way is a long and mainly straight road, which cannot have speed humps as it is a bus route. Problem is that people seem to treat it as a race track. It is already a miracle that a child has not already been seriously hurt.

Resident Karen Purton told us *"I have to manouvre two small children to and from my home the speed some of the buses and vans come past makes me feel sick with worry for our safety. So I hope the drivers will take more care in future"*

Clean up your act drivers. There is a 30 mph limit on this road for a very good reason.



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Vandals direct their activities at the elderly

By far the largest group to use the buses on a regular basis are the over 60's. Buses often arrive late and somewhere sheltered with a seat is an essential for this group. Sadly the facility was mindlessly damaged by a group of totally selfish idiots last month. The broken glass turned the area into a complete no go area for everyone.

Why do they have to do this? It is a direct attack on those who are less able to move around than themselves. Do they think they are clever? Nobody else does. They just heap the anger and scorn of the community upon themselves.

If you do know anything about this incident please call PC Kelly on 07801 461 666. It may be only a small thing, but it could catch those who did this, and at the very least they should pay for repairs. There were some very drunk and noisy young men in Birchanger on Friday night. Was it them? Remember, if you are worried about saying anything because of possible reprisals, the police do have ways of using their discretion. Just tell them about your concerns.

Surgery site to return to Forest Park?

So the site in London Road has its problems after all. Most of us already knew this and what worried the majority of us, the not so central to Stansted patients, was where on earth could we park? There would never have been enough parking places on this proposed site. Just try bringing very sick children and elderly patients then having to hoof it across a busy road to park in the Grafton Green car park. What if it is raining? Not most patients preferred option.

The opportunity for a state of the art medical centre with the ultimate option for minor surgery now has a second chance. Yes it will be difficult for those in Stansted who have had the luxury of being able to walk to the surgery, to get used to having to secure transport to the surgery. The majority of patients never had the option to walk. Many patients also suffered abuse from a few of the long term suffering residents of St John's Road as they struggled to park even when they were not obstructing driveways, infuriating for residents and those careful parking patients alike.

All this has meant is that the well intentioned but ill thought through protest at the removal of the site from the centre of Stansted, is that the agony for Staff at the surgery, who are enduring impossible conditions has been prolonged. We are lucky to have a surgery at all. Hopefully all patients and new residents will enjoy a new surgery in around two years. I for one would welcome not being shouted at when I parked in St John's Road, or having notes on my car when suffering

periods of serious illness. No, I never obstructed anyone's drive.

The objectors and the PCT have a month in which to come up with a new and acceptable site, otherwise the surgery will go ahead at Forest Hall Park. There must be no further delay. There is a possibility that with all the cuts our funding for a new surgery may be lost altogether. It could already be too late. Any further delays may also mean that the practice could decide to throw in the towel and there will be no surgery in Stansted at all.

Open spaces around the hedges

Many people have noticed that the farmers are leaving a gap around the hedges and the crops. Some are using these gaps as unofficial footpaths.

However these are not footpaths for the public use. It is part of a farming initiative to leave some space free for wildlife. Farmers have been accused for years of taking little note of wildlife as natural species of birds, animals and plants are declining noticeably. This is their attempt to redress the balance.

Sorry, but they are not for our use. If we do use them it rather defeats the object of the exercise doesn't it?

A new form of vandalism

Not content with chucking bottles and litter about, it seems that some young men have found a new way of endangering the children who play in the Recreation Ground. Several men have been seen in the ground with metal detectors and tools with which they dig out divots from the soil but fail to replace them properly so the grass cannot grow.

Not only are the endangering those who play there, they are acting totally illegally and the police will prosecute. It is a criminal offence to operate metal detectors over land without the permission of the owner. In this case the owner is the Parish Council, and permission has categorically not been given for anyone to dig up the Recreation Ground or to use a metal detector there.

For the information of the perpetrators of this offence, anything they may have found does not belong to them. It is the property of the people of Birchanger and if kept, theft is added to the list of offences.

For the majority of legitimate users of the Recreation Ground, please be very careful yet again. The Parish Council has arranged for the holes to be repaired, but until the offenders are caught, the danger to young children is still there

A tale of two airports

We are sadly becoming used to the ordeal by security which awaits everyone before they can actually get onto the plane which will, ash clouds permitting whisk them off to their holiday

or on a business trip. The problem is that some airports manage to make it a much easier experience than others. My family discovered this on a recent trip to Portugal with their children, a boy of 11 and their seven year old daughter. Both children were excited and looked forward to the trip. Before they had reached the plane both were reduced to tears.

The boy had been making models just before they had left, and had scooped a few into his bag to finish on the journey. The problem was that unknown to his parents he had also scooped up his tiny modelling scissors. After his bag went through the X Ray machine at Gatwick, he was pulled over and told he had an illegal item in his bag. He was made to stand alone while his bag was unpacked by a stranger and although of small build, his parents were not allowed to join him. He was reduced to tears and his scissors were of course confiscated.

Meanwhile another situation had arisen with the daughter. She had gone through security and had asked one of the staff if she might now open her 80 ml sealed proprietary branded orange drink as she was thirsty. The staff member said she could. The next thing to happen was that another member of staff approached with a device to measure the explosives which might have been in the drink. Something which looked like a Geiger counter was passed over her face. She then was escorted to a chair where a cotton bud was used to swab her mouth. Child number two was in tears.

Both children dreaded the return journey through security. They were in for a welcome surprise. The staff at Porto invited the children to come forward. Explained why they were going to X ray their bags and sympathised with the inconvenience. They chatted to the children, smiled and put them at their ease. Luckily there were no problems, but even if there had been, the very nature of the staff would have meant that the children would not have been reduced to tears. Sometimes you do wonder if the British like children at all. If you are going through an airport this summer, try to make sure your children do not have any suspect items, and even if they are told they can have their drink, best wait until they are out of the security area altogether.

NHS is great, but still has a long way to go

A recent spell in a London Hospital meant that I was able to see the NHS in action at a high level. Unfortunately some of the old classics did happen and I would love to meet the person who just might be able to pull everything together for those on the receiving end.

Yes there are too many administrators but they still seem to be unable to communicate in a normal way. Letters to me were never written, appointments made were on the assumption that I would attend without telling me about it first and yet for some things I was telephoned several times.

When I was admitted everything was disjointed. Information given by one staff member was rescinded by another. Care was good when it happened but the staff were so busy in a high tech ward, that it was delivered in a disorganised manner. No ward sister, no matron in sight. They all worked hard on long twelve hour shifts, but it did seem that they needed direction. As a result all the old classics happened. Patients were left on bedpans, without medication, and food was placed out of the reach of those who lacked mobility. They were sent to the wrong place at the wrong time. Ward rounds were rushed and patients seemed to be expected to make the appropriate noises as conclusions had already been made. There was no time to listen to them. Cleaning if it could be called that, was abysmal. Nothing was ever moved, vacant spaces were wiped over without cleaning a cloth or mop at any point. All of this when there was an epidemic of norovirus in the hospital!

My wish list for cuts for the NHS, if there must be any, would be that they be made amongst the administrators. Money would indeed be saved if they were better trained and less in number. There does need to be more medical staff on duty at all times to lessen the stress suffered by those who are doing an uphill job at the best of times. Technology has advanced but that tends to complicate the ordinary basic care as it is easy to get hung up on this. Patients have to fight for information and when it comes it is not always reliable. Nobody will say I don't know, or I will find out. Discharges are sudden and at very short notice, not easy for patients or their relatives to arrange. The NHS could do great things. Let's hope it will be given the right resources to make this happen

Don't let the wrong person take your waste

Did you know that as a householder you have a duty of care to ensure your waste is passed on to an authorised person who will ensure that it is disposed of correctly?

Recently sacks of clothing were deposited in Tot Lane believed to be from people who drop off plastic bags for the collection of old clothes. The responsibility for these dumped items remains yours and if the items are traced back the householder could be in for a fine of up to £5000 even though you believed the items were for a charity collection.

Legitimate authorised waste carriers have a waste carrier number. If this number does not appear on the collecting bag, do not use the bag at all. If someone offers to take your waste away, make sure you take their vehicle license number. A great deal of fly tipping is carried out by men in vans, who do this as a living and who simply take money for the disposal of rubbish and then tip it into a convenient out of the way spot. Do not trust the man who offers to take away unwanted items for disposal for a "reasonable" charge. You have the responsibility and the right to make your own checks to avoid a possible hefty fine.

Uttlesford District Council tries very hard to find the originators of fly tipping. Rubbish is sifted to try to discover the identity of the source. If you do see somebody fly tipping or spot dumped rubbish of any sort, please call UDC on 01799 510510. The council has also launched its clean up Uttlesford campaign which will aim to stop and to clean up litter in the district. Litter louts watch out.

A Common's Blunder.

It was the afternoon which nobody thought they would ever see, the day SSE held a reception hosted by Sir Alan Haselhurst in the House of Commons to celebrate the news that the new government had scrapped all plans for a Second Runway at Stansted. It was a day that nobody thought would ever come and all present were in jubilant mood.

One man rather over did things, by attempting to write Long Live BAA on a pristine brand new white board which had been intended for everyone present to subscribe to the plea for a moratorium on any second runway for at least the next 50 years.

The gentleman concerned had unwittingly used a marker pen which contained indelible ink. The organisers had decided the signatures should last for 50 years as well but had omitted to tell anyone.

Brian Ross now owes two ladies a new bottle of perfume as it was this which finally mostly removed the offending logo. Well you know what they say about boys and their toys?

School News

New Class Teacher For Class 2.

Class 2 is getting ready to welcome their new teacher Mrs Sharon Vessey in September. Mrs Vessey has spent some time at the school, met the children and their parents, so she will certainly not be a stranger to her class when the children return to school after the holidays. Mrs Vessey faced stiff opposition as there were a great many applicants for the post and the competition was strong. However Mrs Vessey was the one who impressed the selection panel in their unanimous decision.

Swimming Lessons at Risk

It is the wish of the school that all children are given an opportunity to learn to swim during their time at Birchanger. The problem is that the school is facing increasing costs on a lower budget. To send just one group of children each week costs £180. The school has had to look for locations other than Grange Paddocks because of the poor changing facilities there. The plan is to find a new venue for the older children to go to in September, while the youngest children will use the small pool at the Lord Butler Centre. None of this is ideal and to make it work sadly parents will have to be asked for voluntary contributions. Not something the school would wish to do in an ideal world.

Birchanger school Celebrates the World Cup

Never mind England's lack lustre performance, Birchanger School children used their non uniform day to celebrate the occasion with an opportunity to come as an England player or supporter, complete with face paint. They each paid £1 for the privilege and fund raised throughout the day to help the brother of two of the pupils who had a very serious accident and was in Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Needless to say all this was before England's somewhat ignominious homecoming!

Learning to be Safe with Crucial Crew.

For five days last month Essex Police came together with other vital services from across Essex to give children vital lessons in their own and community safety which it is hoped they will remember for the rest of their lives. Uttlesford District Council arranged the week at Thaxted for over 1000 Year 6 pupils and invited all the police services, including Transport Police, Essex County Council Ambulances, Fire and Rescue, Representatives from the Health Services and the Essex County Council to arrange a series of workshops over the week to teach children how to be safe in all aspects of their lives and the communities in which they live. Birchanger children participated to the full and rose to all the challenges they were set. It is something which is vitally important and which provides material and challenging situations which most of the participants had never experienced and knew little about. There was also the opportunity to get to know the Emergency Services and to understand something of their work.

A Very Special Assembly.

There was a very special assembly at the school when a leading member of Uttlesford District Council, Howard Rolfe,

who leads the West Essex Partnership presented awards to the children who had made exceptional progress in particular areas throughout the school year.

Mrs Warbrick had heard about the scheme sometime ago and had decided that the school would participate in the awards scheme. It is a very worthwhile project as the prize winning children all received Book Tokens to the value of £20 at a special presentation at the Uttlesford District Council two weeks later. The awards were for those who had achieved the most and were outstanding in particular areas. These are rewards for those who try the hardest and are the best achievers. The worthy recipients were Sophia Kristensen for Literacy, for Persistence which has led to Outstanding Progress Kieran Lamplugh, Ethan Sherriff for Music, Joshua Tierney for Science, Kuger Tomasik for Sport, Jack Williams for Numeracy. It was the end of Sports Week and the Sporting Achievements of the Week were also recognised and once again Cllr Rolfe presented certificates to the children. Parents had also joined in the fun when they came to school earlier to take part in tennis and racket sports before the assembly.



Spangles Children's Centre has its main hub in Stansted but it also offers services to parents and carers with children under 5 years old in many villages in Uttlesford. The Children's Centre provides activities and classes for parents, babies and young children. It can also supply information on childminders, baby and toddler groups, preschools, nurseries and primary schools. Spangles has links to family health teams, provides support for families and children with additional needs and runs parenting classes. The staff also link with Job Centre+ to provide information about benefits and finding a job.

Spangles is holding a special event for families with children up to 5 years old who receive this newsletter.

Come and have fun with your child at our MINI ACTIVE PLAY SESSION. There will be soft play, a bouncy castle and lots of activities to help your child develop their co-ordination, balance and fitness and use up all their energy!

The MINI ACTIVE PLAY SESSION will be held at the Mountfitchet Romeera Leisure Centre, Forest Hall Road, Stansted on Saturday 7th August from 10-12am

Please call Spangles on 01279 812348 to book a place. THERE WILL BE NO CHARGE FOR THIS EVENT

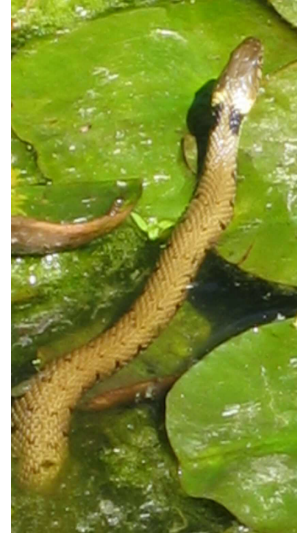
Nature Watch

Grass Snakes in Birchanger

Snakes have both a fascination and a horror for most people. Sadly for some they feel they must kill the snake and ask questions later, but adders are very rare in this part of the world. Even though adders will not attack people unless provoked or frightened, people are instinctively afraid of all snakes and react accordingly.

It is different with grass snakes. The worst this non poisonous snake can do is to add a diet of amphibians to their normally green diet. Females can grow up to 3ft in length, the males are generally a foot smaller but both male and female snakes share the same colour. Their upper sides are an olive brown with vertical black bars down each side. They have two orange crescent shaped patches on the nape of the neck with two triangles just behind. The eye has a rounded pupil which distinguishes it from the adder which has a slit for a pupil. The females lay their eggs in June and July.

Grass snakes can be found beside ponds, ditches and hedge grows and are already here in Birchanger. Their only defence is to adopt a threatening pose by darting their head about and hissing. Despite the show they are completely harmless and very scared of people.



Remember if you do see a snake this summer in Birchanger, it is highly unlikely to be an adder.

An unusual encounter

Sadly there is no picture of this, but there was a very curious encounter between a young cat, two magpies and a tiny roe deer in June.

I had never seen this type of deer in the garden before, but it seemed to be totally at home, nibbling at the odd tree and helping itself to the odd flower, when a young tabby cat appeared and seemed to want to play with the deer. Next to arrive were two magpies who clearly wanted the deer off their patch. The cat who up to then had thought the deer might make a good playmate decided to join in the bullying and started to run at the deer beside the two magpies. The deer held its ground and carried on with lunch. The cat was the first to get bored and finally the two magpies gave up. The deer carried on eating, but has not been seen since.

Not only had I never seen this tiny roe deer in the garden before, but I have also never seen a cat and two magpies act in this way.

The Turnips are Returning.

Remember the first Birchanger Art Exhibition nearly two years ago? Well the Art Exhibition will be back on September 4th and 5th and with it the opportunity to see the works of local artists as well as the option to buy them or to think about buying them over a cup of tea. The Turnips will be back as well. There will also be a photographic exhibition at the Church. Details of this appear elsewhere in the magazine.

The message is that now is the time to get thinking about your entry to the Turnip prize. Whatever it is it must be in the spirit of the Turner prize. If it is too large it may have to remain outside the tent over night. Exhibits must also be removed at the end of the exhibition at 5pm on Sunday September 5th. Otherwise the choice of any exhibit is yours and can be great fun to create.

Whatever you choose to do be it a photo exhibit or a work of art in your own style, now is the time to start thinking about it. I can give you further information on 812793.

All the proceeds from the exhibition will once again go to Birchanger Projects.

Susie soothes stress

I am delighted to welcome a new, healing, advertiser to our pages

Susie Smith is a specialist practitioner in the homeopathic arts of Reflexology, Reiki and Massage. What are they, you ask? Well, read on and I'll try and enlighten you

Reflexology is a treatment that uses our feet as gateways to the rest of our bodies. Students of the art believe that all areas of our body are reflected in corresponding parts of our feet and, by manipulating the feet you can stimulate and help heal the body. Susie says that reflexology can help with stress, insomnia, back pain and pregnancy (women have been known to endure labour with reflexology!). It can be used as a one off, or as an on-going treatment aimed at reducing symptoms and dependence on prescription drugs

Reiki is, according to Susie, a treatment that focuses emotional, mental and spiritual forces to deal with many of the same symptoms as reflexology but this is a hands-off approach with the hands hovering above the area being treated

Susie's final treatment method is **massage**, where she provides two types: Swedish massage is delivered with oil, or another medium, or acupressure with is able to be enjoyed fully clothed while sitting on a chair!

All of these treatments are fundamentally relaxing while they also aim to heal and Susie is determined to put her long-time love of alternative therapies to good use in her business which has now been running for two years even though she has been qualified for four. She gave up a successful career in financial recruitment to concentrate on this new direction and, although launching in a recession has been difficult, her hard work and determination is now beginning to pay off

Based in Stansted Susie already has clients in Birchanger and sees the village as important in her growth plans and, to that end, she is offering £5 off the first treatment to anyone presenting the village mag

We wish Susie all the best as an advertiser, and if you want to find out more about the services Susie offers, see the ad on the back page of visit her web site at www.susiesmithreflexology.co.uk

Testimonials for Susie:

'So far I have had 3 sessions of reflexology on my feet that were badly swollen and I cannot praise Susie more highly. I also sleep better! She also has massaged my back and unknotted me which improves my golf swing. She is an engaging and interesting person and I would recommend her to anybody.

Bob Jennings

When I first met Susie I was suffering from ovulation pains. I had been to hospital three times in one year because of it and none of the medication the doctors gave me seemed to help. I was missing loads of school time because I was in too much pain to go, and we didn't know what to try next. When my mum suggested reflexology it was something new and I was shy, but by the next treatment I was really enthusiastic. Over the last year or so, it has helped me beyond belief. I have got my attendance at school up to over 90% and this year I got 100% A grades. Susie has done more for me than I thought was ever possible and as well as not feeling ill anymore, it's also boosted my confidence and made me really optimistic. I have also recently started having reiki and it's just as good.

Anon

"Susie has treated me for 3 years. I have ME and have found reflexology beneficial throughout the stages of my illness. With Susie, I have been lucky enough to be treated at home when I have not been able to visit her clinic. I have always found her to be professional with a talent for combining care and knowledge to adapt her skills to suit each client. I have recommended Susie to other people who have also benefitted from her therapies."

Mrs Langwith, Spellbrook

MC

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

I was amused to read the front page story ('YES THEY DID') in last month's Birchanger Magazine even though some of the humour was at my expense. The story was, of course, about BAA's capitulation on its second runway plans.

However, I need to make a correction about SSE's future plans. This is either good news or bad news depending on your point of view and, in particular, what calendar you would like to have on your kitchen wall next year.

You should expect a knock on your door from SSE in November/December because **there will be an SSE Community Calendar for 2011 and also, as usual, an SSE Christmas Card.**

The reason for continuing for one more year with the SSE Calendar and Christmas cards is that there is unfinished business. Although BAA has withdrawn its planning application for a second Stansted runway, there is nothing to prevent it submitting a new application at any time. Government policy has not yet been formally changed and if the Coalition Government were to collapse for any reason within the next 12-18 months, we could be vulnerable to a fresh planning application.

A new draft Government airports policy is due to be published for consultation early next year and SSE is lobbying hard in Whitehall and Westminster trying to ensure that this minimises the threat to Stansted. The new policy is not expected to be finalised until late next year and there is a lot of work to do between now and then.

In addition, a new Airports Regulation Bill was included in the Queens Speech and will go through Parliament next year. This could result in greater safeguards - or fewer safeguards - from the threat of a second Stansted runway, depending on the final wording of the Act. So, here also, there is work to do over the next year or so. SSE is already working on this with our local MPs, the CAA and key civil servants in the Department for Transport.

Added to the above, the question about the future ownership of Stansted Airport has still not been resolved. BAA and the Competition Commission are still battling it out through the Courts. It could be another year or so before the issue is finally settled.

Finally, later this year, the Government is due to launch a major consultation on night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports.

In summary, there's unfinished business and it's too soon to let our guard down. SSE needs to keep going for about another 18 months.

Julie insists that I'll need to find some new form of mischief after that.

Brian Ross

PS - The (in)famous SSE Birchanger Burns Supper will be held for the last time on 22 January 2011.

And Red Aprons too

Dear Ed

I would like to make the following comments regarding the item "Red Aprons", whilst Basildon Hospital is to be congratulated on this new initiative, it is not new to Uttlesford.

Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow commenced the wearing of tabards marked Drug Round two years ago and has been successful in preventing incidents which often occur with frequent interruptions by patients and visitors. I am sure that other Hospitals would have also introduced this as a safety measure whilst doing the "drug round."

Cathy Gooding

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Village Diary May/June 2010

July

25th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

31st 8.00 pm At the Club
Karaoke & Disco

August

1st 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

8th 11.00 am St Mary's

14th 8.00pm At the Club
Charity Quiz

15th 11.00 am St Mary's

20th 8.00 At the Club
Poker Night

22nd 11.00 am St Mary's

29th 11.00 am St Mary's

D Bonney & Sons

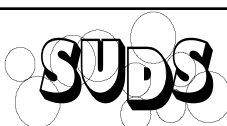


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